

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-92 were pending in the original application and claim 93 was previously added in the application. As noted by the Examiner, claims 31-33, 35, 36, 38-40, 43, 73-78, and 80 were withdrawn from consideration due to restriction election. In the Office Action, the Examiner: (1) rejected claims 1, 3, 27-29, 37, 41-42, 44, 46, 70-71, 79, 81, 83, and 91-92 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,404, 446 to Bates et al. (the "Bates patent") and U.S. Patent No. 6,678,705 to Berchtold et al. (the "Berchtold patent"); objected to claims 2, 4-26, 34, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form; and (3) allowed claim 93. Applicants note that no statement was made with regard to claim 30. In this response, the Applicants respectfully: (1) cancel claims 1, 27-29, 37, 44, 46, 70, 71, 79, 81, 83, 91, and 92; (2) amend claims 2,, 4-26, 34, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90 to place those claims in independent form or to make them dependent upon an allowable independent claim, overcoming the Examiner's objection; (3) place claim 30 in independent form; and (4) amend claims 3, 41, and 42 to depend from amended claim 2.

II. Claims 1, 27-29, 37, 44, 46, 70, 71, 79, 81, 83, 91, and 92 Have Been Cancelled

As noted above, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 27-29, 37, 41, 42, 44, 46, 70, 71, 79, 81, 83, 91, and 92. Applicant has cancelled claims 1, 27-29, 37, 44, 46, 70, 71, 79, 81, 83, 91, and 92, originally rejected by Examiner. As discussed further below, Applicant has amended

claims 3, 41, and 42 to be dependent upon an allowable claim. Therefore, Applicant has overcome the Examiner's rejection of the abovementioned claims.

III. Claims 2, 4-26, 34, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90 Should Be Allowed

The Examiner objected to Claims 2, 4-26, 34, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90, but stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to incorporate all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims from which they depend. Accordingly, Claims 2, 4-26, 34, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90 have been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims from which they were dependent, or now depend from an allowable independent claim. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 2, 4-26, 34, 41, 42, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90 as amended, are patentable, and the objection of Claims 2, 4-26, 34, 41, 42, 45, 47-69, 72, 82, and 84-90 is overcome.

IV. Claims 3, 41, and 42 Should be Allowed

As noted above, the Examiner initially rejected dependent claims 3, 41, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103. In this response, Applicant has amended claims 3, 41, and 42 to depend from allowable independent claim 2. Because all dependent claims import the limitations of the independent claims from which they depend, Applicant respectfully submit that claims 3, 41, and 42 should be allowed.

V. No New Matter Is Introduced by Way of Amendment

Claims have been amended to include all limitations of the base claim from which they were dependent, and also include all intervening claims. Claims 3, 41, and 42 have been

amended to depend from Claim 2, as amended, rather than the cancelled Claim 1. Therefore, no new matter has been introduced by way of amendment.

ADDITIONAL FEE FOR INDEPENDENT CLAIMS

Previously, the application contained five (5) independent claims, and payment was made for five (5) independent claims. As amended, the application contains forty-six (46) independent claims. Thus, for the forty-one (41) additional independent claims at \$44.00 each beyond those previously paid for with the application, Applicants submit herewith a check in the amount of \$1804.00 pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.16(b).

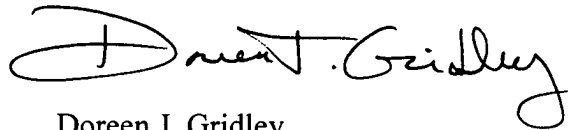
CONCLUSION

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the Applicants have made a patentable contribution to the art and that this response places the above-identified application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

In the event the Applicants have inadvertently overlooked the need for an extension of time or payment of an additional fee, the Applicants conditionally petition therefor, and authorize any fee deficiency to be charged to deposit account 09-0007.

Sincerely,

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Date: 12/01/04

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Enclosures: Check in the amount of \$1804
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cc: Ms. Katherine Kinder
Mr. Jerry Staddon